



By the King.

A Proclamation for preventing the decayes of
Churches and Chappels for the
time to come.



He Kings most Excellent MAIESTIE hauing of late taken
speciall notice of the generall decayes and ruines of Parish Churches
and Chappels in many parts of this Kingdome, and that by Law the
same ought to bee repaired and maintained from time to time, at the
proper charge of the Inhabitants and occupiers of Lands Within
those Parishes and Chappelries respectively, Who being altogether
carelesse of their dueties therein, haue in many places wilfully neglec-
ted the same, when with a little charge seasonably bestowed in time,
they might easily prevent those great ruines, which afterwards grow
more heauy to be supported by their own defaults, and sometimes those
Churches and Chappels are by them purposely suffered to run into

such extreame ruine and decay out of hope to obtaine some generall Collection, whereby to spare
themselves, and to get the Worke, which they are bound to doe by law, to bee done by the com-
mon purse of others, such Collections hauing been of late yeeres more frequently granted then
heretofore.

His Maiestie therefore taking this matter into his princely consideration, and holding it a
great dishonour to our Christian profession, that the consecrated places of Gods worship and
Divine Service are no better looked vnto, doth by this his Proclamation straitly charge & com-
mand all Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons, and others to whom it may appertaine, That
they take speciall care, each of them within his owne limits and Jurisdiction, that this point of
keeping and vpholding the Churches and Chappels from time to time, in good, decent, and sub-
stantiall repaire, bee exactly and duely performed, and therein not to rely vpon the Churchwar-
dens Presentments, Who to save themselves and their neighbours from charge, will easily omit
to make knowne the decayes of their Churches and their owne defaults, but either by themselves
in person, or by their Officials, or other persons of worth and trust, to take view and survey of

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the Churches and Chappels within their severall Jurisdiccons, and where they find ought amisse, to cause the same to be speedily and carefully amended, and to limit and appoint set dayes for the doing thereof, that no needfull worke be deserted too long, and to vse the power of the Ecclesiastical Courtes for putting the same in due execution. Willing and requiring also all his Maiesties Judges of the Common Law, to be very carefull and wary, that in these cases whiche concerne the repaire of Churches & Chappels according to this his Maiesties princely care, and Royall commandement, the good worke vndertaken in the Ecclesiastical Courtes bee not interrupted, by their too easie granting of Prohibitions, whiche, as with other cases, so especially in this, would not be granted, but vpon weighty and great cause, and vpon strict and due examination.

And to take away from the said Inhabitants and Land-holders of Parishes, the hope whiche they haue heretofore had to relieue themselves by publique Collections, as also to prevent the causelesse burthening of His louing Subiects, not lyable by the Law to the sayd reparations, his Maiestie hereby doeth further charge and command the Lord Keeper of the great Seale of England, that from henceforth no Letters Patents be granted, nor suffered to passe the Seale for any Collection for the repayinge or new building of any Churches or Chappels, or the Steeple of the same, excepting onely in case of casualty by fire, or extraordinary violence of Tempest, whereby the sayd Churches, Chappels, or Steeple are suddenly, without the parishioners default, so greatly decayed, as the Inhabitants and Land-holders are not able without helpe of others, to repayre or new build the same.

All whiche his Maiestie doth will and command to be from henceforth duely and strictly observed, as wel by the said Lord Keeper for his part, as by the said Archbishops, Bishops, Judges, and others for their parts, as they tender his Maiesties good pleasure and Royall Commandement, that the great inconuenience, and dishonour of suffering the houses of Gods Worshipe and seruice, to runne into ruine and decay amongst vs, may bee hereafter carefully prevented.

Giuen at His Maiesties Honour of Hampton Court, the eleventh day of October, in the fift yeere of His Reigne, of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland.

God sauе the King.



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